

LOCALNEWS

Littlefork teen selected for unique program

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

Karsyn Wendt has a permanent smile on her face. And for a good reason. The 17-year-old senior at Littlefork-Big Falls School is preparing for the experience of a lifetime. In July, the teen will travel all over the United States, Mexico and Europe for a semester-long international, educational and cultural program, Up with People.

“I’m really looking forward to meeting new people and experiencing all these new things,” she said. “I’m really excited.”

Wendt was one of about 100 people selected among thousands to tour with Up with People, which provides young adults an international and intercultural experience that teaches service

leadership and uses the performing arts to deliver messages of hope and goodwill throughout the world, according to a release.

In the same release, Colleen Eastman, Up with People’s manager of enrollment, said, “During the past four decades, the 20,000 participants who have traveled in Up with People have gone to become enthusiastic leaders in their communities and world ... We are excited to have Wendt represent Littlefork on our next world tour.”

Wendt and others in the program will spend a few weeks in Denver, Colo.,



Karsyn Wendt

More information

To help Wendt on her journey, donations can be made to <https://www.gofundme.com/karsy-gives-back>

training before traveling to the East Coast for five weeks, Mexico for five weeks and Europe for another five weeks. All the while, she will be taking college courses and will earn 12 college credits.

“I’m a big family person, so it will be hard to be gone for that long,” she said. “But it’ll be good.”

The group, Wendt said, will move to a different city each week to work on a wide range of community service projects while living with a different host family.

“They told us the community service can be anything from reading to children to building houses,” she said of the more than 200 hours of community service she will perform during the semester.

At the end of the week, the group puts on a performance for the community.

**Taking the opportunity**

Wendt’s cousin works for Up with People and Wendt said after hearing about the program, she knew it was right up her alley.

“I’m very interested in communications and I’m involved in a lot of community service and theater,” she said. “And (Up with People) is kind of a combination of all of those.”

The teen has quite the resume of community service work both within Littlefork and nationally. Aside from heavy involvement with her

church, Littlefork Lutheran Church, she also volunteers at the local nursing home and at her school.

“I also went on an 11-day trip to Louisiana to help clean up after Hurricane Katrina,” she said.

And if that doesn’t keep her busy enough, Wendt is also involved in volleyball, theater, National Honor Society, student council and knowledge bowl.

“I don’t get a lot of free time,” she said with a laugh. “But I like it.”

So what is it about helping others that keeps Wendt coming back for more?

“I think it’s the reaction on people’s faces when they’ve been helped and see that people care,” she said.

**Paying her way**

While Wendt can apply for scholarships and financial aid through Up with

People, she said the cost of the trip comes out of her own pocket.

“I’ll be doing a lot of fundraising,” she said.

One of the bigger efforts Wendt has planned is an April 26 dinner and silent auction at Littlefork Lutheran Church, 1210 Sixth Ave., Littlefork.

The free-will dinner, which is scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m., will feature Wendt and give a presentation about Up with People and what she’ll be doing with the program.

She added she plans to send sponsor letters to area businesses to help with funding.

“I’m really excited about this opportunity and am so thankful of whoever can help make this journey possible for me,” she said. “I just want to make a difference and I want to help people.”

Choirs to perform

BY EMILY GEDDE  
Staff Writer

A first-time event is making its way to Backus Community Center Wednesday. From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., school choirs from around the Borderland area will participate in the Borderland Choral Festival.

Similar to February’s All School Music Festival featuring bands from different schools, the event, organized by Falls music teacher Tamara Koenig, will bring together about 140 students from area schools to present a joint concert of choral music. The concert is free to the public and begins at 1:30 p.m.

“This differs from the All School Music Festival in that the showcase features soloists and small ensembles, not a large massed choir,” Koenig said.

Students from International Falls, Littlefork and Indus will perform during the event and each schools’ director will be rehearsing and conducting three songs.

“The main goals I had for organizing this festival was to give our area students an opportunity to work with other directors and students,” Koenig said. “And to sing in a large ensemble and to just experience the joy of singing.”

Senior Linkage Line volunteers needed

ARDC STAFF REPORT

The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging will conduct a three-day training class in June for persons interested in becoming counselors in the State Health Insurance and Assistance Program.

Counselors will help Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers better understand Medicare options by providing information and referrals regarding resources as well as helping seniors enroll in programs that could assist with health insurance costs and lower prescription

drug costs.

“Thank you for being there for seniors!” said a person who was assisted by a Senior LinkAge Line volunteer. Another said, “I very much appreciate your service. I don’t know what I would do without your help.”

Persons interested in volunteering to assist seniors are asked to enroll in the three-day training where they will receive 18 hours of classroom learning. The next training class is planned for 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 17-19 at Backus Community Center. Registration is required and will be

accepted through June 3. For a registration packet, contact Lee Swenson at the Senior LinkAge Line, 1-800-333-2433, ext. 81019.

Volunteers will receive staff support, guidance, and on-going training from Senior LinkAge Line staff person Karen Tveit, of the Falls, as they provide assistance, outreach, and one-on-one counseling with seniors.

Promoting health for older adults and family caregivers is an important function of the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging. The Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging is a part of the Arrowhead

Regional Development Commission.


The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission is a regional comprehensive planning and development agency serving the counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis in Northeast Minnesota.

ARDC’s mission is to serve the people of the Arrowhead Region by providing local units of government and citizen groups a means to work cooperatively in identifying needs, solving problems and fostering local leadership.

*In Loving Memory of*

# GARY OGDEN

DECEMBER 15, 1946 - MARCH 29, 2013



*Feel no guilt in laughter,  
He knows how much you care.  
Feel no sorrow in a smile,  
That he's not here to share.  
You cannot grieve forever,  
He would not want you to.  
He'd hope that you can carry on,  
The way you always do.  
So talk about the good times,  
And the ways you showed you cared,  
The days you spent together, all the happiness you shared.  
Let memories surround you.*

*A word someone may say, will suddenly recapture a time, an hour, a day,  
That brings him back as clearly as though he were still here,  
And fills you with the feelings that he is always near.  
For if you keep these moments, you will never be apart,  
And he will live forever locked safe within your heart.*

Always Loved and Missed,  
Your Family xo

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★ Border State Bank will be the central drop point for this community-wide effort. As in previous years, we will match up to \$1000.00 of funds donated.

★ All donations collected will benefit Falls Hunger Coalition.

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